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New York

President: Mr. Lajčák ..... (Slovakia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda items 66 and 13

New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

(a) New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

Report of the Secretary-General (A/72/223)

(b) Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General (A/72/269)

2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa

The President: It is an honour to address this joint debate, which will be the final event of this year's Africa Week and will address many issues that are crucial to Africa's development. To begin, I will make three brief points.

First, I want to acknowledge the importance of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). NEPAD was something of a trailblazer. It predates, by more than a decade, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. Nevertheless, many of its core priorities are also found in those later frameworks, including infrastructure development, human development, food security, education and training, and health.

Since its adoption in 2001, NEPAD has led transformative change. For example, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme has improved agricultural productivity on the continent. It has also changed people's lives in many African countries. Additionally, NEPAD has generated big strides towards the integration of African trade. The finalization this summer of the Tripartite Free Trade Area Agreement was an important step that will harmonize three subregional blocs that previously had their own rules and models for trade. A continental free trade area is no longer a distant dream; it could very soon be a reality.

Major hurdles still need to be overcome. Faster progress needs to be made, not only in the sectors of agriculture and trade, but also in a wide range of key areas including infrastructure, industry, economic diversification and poverty eradication. NEPAD, together with the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, sets out a very clear plan for how such progress can be achieved. We must ensure that those frameworks are harmonized and integrated, particularly with regard to reporting, follow-up and review.

Secondly, I want to repeat a message that I have heard many times this week, which is that no development in Africa can take hold unless it is led from within. When NEPAD was adopted in 2001, it acted as a strong sign of regional leadership in development. That was reaffirmed through the adoption of Agenda 2063. The roles played by the African Union, regional economic communities and subregional organizations have been indispensable. They have acted as the

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engines of progress in sustainable development, as well as in building African capacities in the areas of peace and security.

We have also seen many exciting developments at the national level. There are ongoing efforts to integrate the goals and targets of international and regional frameworks into national development plans. African countries are also building their capacities for domestic resource mobilization and tackling illicit financial flows. However, in an increasingly globalized world, no single country or region can go it alone.

The efforts taking place within Africa need to be supported by a revitalized partnership for development. We need closer partnerships between Africa and its development partners, including the United Nations bodies and Member States. Official development assistance and other commitments are crucial in order to enhance finance, technology transfer and market access. Moreover, investment must be incentivized at the national, regional and international levels.

Thirdly, as we have heard this week, development in Africa should not be seen as a stand-alone activity. No support that we give to the New Partnership for Africa's Development will bring about lasting change if we do not also address the root causes of conflict. Similarly, we cannot look at how to prevent societies turning to violence without addressing many of the core priorities of NEPAD. That is why today's joint debate is very important. It deal with issues that are different but closely linked. That reflects reality for many people. Yes, sustainable and inclusive development will improve entire societies, but the signing of a trade agreement will mean little to a mother whose young child is very sick from malaria. Similarly, foreign direct investment is not on the mind of someone who is running away from a hail of bullets.

Africa has a very clear vision. It is one that involves all layers of society, while benefiting from growth and development; one in which malaria and other diseases do not serve as death sentences for hundreds of thousands of people every year; one in which early warning signs of conflict lead more often to successful mediation than to violence; and one in which institutions are strong, both women and young people lead and participate, and good governance is the norm. That vision is becoming closer to reality. This week and today's debate will allow us to take another step in the right direction.

Mr. Charwath (Austria): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Friends of Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development — a group of 37 countries that believes that inclusive and sustainable industrial development plays a crucial role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that we have set for ourselves in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We thank the Secretary-General for the fifteenth consolidated progress report on the implementation of and international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The report outlines that,

> "an immediate priority for African countries is to intensify efforts to accelerate economic growth through industrialization and structural transformation, which are key to achieving sustainable development". (*A/72/223, pp. 1-2*)

The role played by industrialization as one of the key enablers and catalysts for sustainable development has been well established. Target 2 of SDG 9 aims at promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization and at raising industry's share in employment and gross domestic product. In that regard, achieving structural transformation through more accelerated and coordinated industrialization efforts should remain a key development priority for Africa. We therefore welcome efforts by the NEPAD Agency, together with the South Africa Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, to work towards achieving a road map for countries outlining ways to achieve the short-, medium- and long-term industrialization targets for the continent, as set out in the Action Plan for the Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa. We also welcome the initiatives of the Group of 20 to support the industrialization efforts of African States through investment promotion and the building of capacity in science, technology and innovation programmes in line with the African Union's 2063 Agenda.

The international community, including the United Nations system, must play a critical role in assisting countries on the road to industrialization. The General Assembly's adoption of the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa for the period 2016-2025 (resolution 70/293) adds to that commitment and assigns the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) a leading role in promoting inclusive and sustainable industrial development in close collaboration with the African Union, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the African

Development Bank and the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa.

UNIDO assists developing countries in designing and implementing industrial policies and enhancing local productive capacities and entrepreneurship. Its technical assistance contributes to job creation, advancing economic competitiveness and enabling market access. UNIDO also plays a significant role in advancing the diffusion of environmentally sound technologies and practices in production systems and in collaborating with the private and public sector so as to mobilize investments in an inclusive, sustainable and resilient manner.

We commend UNIDO for the important role that it plays in furthering inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and we trust that it will play an important role in the industrial development of Africa in line with continental, regional and national priorities.

Mr. Moustafa (Egypt): I have the honour to address the General Assembly on behalf of the Group of African States in this important debate on issues of great importance to Africa's peace, security and development. I would like in that connection to thank President Lajčák for his opening remarks.

At the outset, I wish to express the deep appreciation of the African Group to all Member States for their commitment to keeping the special needs of Africa among the top priorities of the Organization, and for showing solidarity with African countries in their efforts to achieve inclusive growth, sustainable development and promoting peace and stability across the continent. I also wish to take this opportunity to recognize the efforts of Secretary-General António Guterres and the entire United Nations system for their commitment to enhancing coherent United Nations system support for Africa, as well as for supporting the transformative African Union Agenda 2063.

The peace and development nexus is evident today in the two reports of the Secretary-General, which constitute the basis of our debate — namely, the report entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: fifteenth consolidated progress report on implementation and international support" (A/72/223) and that entitled "Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" (A/72/269). Clearly, as the world pursues a new milestone in the global partnership for development, as represented by the ongoing process of implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, it is imperative to continue to place Africa at the centre of United Nations efforts to eradicate poverty, address the impact of climate change and ensure inclusive economic growth and sustainable development.

Indeed, eradicating poverty remains the greatest development challenge for African countries, in which half of the world's poor live. The African Group is concerned about the fact that two years after we began implementing the 2030 Agenda, global hunger is once again on the rise and affects 815 million people. That is an increase from 777 million in 2015, according to recent reports on the state of food security and nutrition. It is therefore imperative that we ensure that the special development needs of Africa, particularly poverty eradication, are accorded due attention by the United Nations development system.

In that regard, our efforts should focus on the necessary means of implementation, including financial resources, technology transfer and capacity-building. The scale must be ambitious enough to meet the aspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Developed countries should fulfil the commitments that they made in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, including official development assistance commitments, as aid remains an important source of development financing for developing countries, particularly in Africa.

The African Group expects that a renewed commitment to the Global Partnership for Sustainable Developmnet will enable a speedy implementation of the 2030 Agenda. While we stress the importance of international support, I would nonetheless like to emphasize that African ownership of the development process is not just a mere concept. African countries have indeed taken primary responsibility for their own development. The experience of implementing the Millennium Development Goals has shown that significan advances were made by African countries, particularly in improving primary-school enrolment, advancing gender equality and halting the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Those advances were mainly the result of sound macroeconomic policies and the remarkable economic growth that Africa has achieved over the past two decades. Nevertheless, systemic issues have affected Africa's rates of economic growth, and international support was not sufficient to bring about a significant

reduction in unemployment and poverty levels, nor in effecting similar positive advances in other goals.

As we appreciate the steady progress in implementing the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and the strong support of the United Nations, particularly in enhancing the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, we have to be mindful that mobilizing support for Africa is now more urgent than ever. That is particularly the case as Africa implements Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, which represents the continent's ambitious and transformative 50-year vision. That people-centred agenda is underpinned by seven core aspirations, including inclusive growth and sustainable development, regional integration, peace and good governance. Achieving those aspirations ultimately hinges on development cooperation and our overall commitment to promoting a strengthened partnership.

The challenges facing Africa today encompass the issues of peace, security and development. There can be no lasting security without inclusive development. Similarly, peace, security and the rule of law — underpinned by credible systems of democratic governance — are prerequisite and indispensable factors for and drivers of development. It is imperative, in that regard, to encourage all partners, including the United Nations system, to support the efforts of African countries in achieving the African Union's Silencing the Guns by 2020 initiative, as envisioned by African leaders in the African Union's Fiftieth Anniversary Solemn Declaration.

African countries have taken numerous steps to address peace and security challenges at the national and regional levels, including — in dealing with terrorism and instability — the establishment of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, the Multinational Joint Task Force and the deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia. Despite limited capacity and resources, those commendable efforts serve as proof of Africa's determination to find solutions to its own security challenges. Furthermore, African countries have demonstrated a growing commitment to the rule of law and good governance. The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) has become a unique and innovative framework for promoting good governance, durable peace and sustainable development across the continent. The African Union is working hard to encourage all African Member States to join the APRM.

In order to complement and strengthen African efforts to address challenges to the continent's peace and security, it is critical that Africa's partners strengthen their support for African peace and security activities and help build the continent's capacity to prevent and resolve conflict through increased assistance. No country or organization can solve those challenges alone. Moreover, the African Group underscores the importance of the long-standing and exemplary partnership between the United Nations and Africa, notably in efforts to support the establishment and operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture. That includes cooperation between the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and the United Nations Security Council, as well as the African Standby Force and continued support for the APRM.

The African Group commends the renewed commitment on the part of the United Nations and the African Union to strengthening their cooperation and promoting a strategic partnership, as demonstrated by the signing in April of the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. In that regard, the African Group wishes to acknowledge Secretary-General António Guterres' emphasis on prevention as an important cornerstone that reinforces the nexus between the key pillars of the work of the United Nations, namely, peace and security, development and human rights. Indeed, promoting sustainable development and ensuring a life of dignity for all represent the most effective strategy for conflict prevention.

With regard to the acceleration of efforts to control and eliminate malaria by 2030 in developing countries — particularly African countries — the African Group welcomes the continued commitment on the part of the international community to the eradication of malaria and other diseases, as stipulated clearly under Sustainable Development Goal 3 of the 2030 Agenda. In that regard, we underscore the need to undertake preventive measures, including strengthening the capacities of African countries' health and disease surveillance systems. We concur with the recommendations of the Secretary-General that a concerted and coordinated global effort will be needed in order to substantially reduce malaria transmission, morbidity and mortality by 2030.

Finally, I wish to conclude by emphasizing that the African Group stands ready to work with the United

Nations system and other development partners to mobilize support for the integrated implementation of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in order to ensure a mutually reinforcing implementation of both agendas.

Mr. Ismail (Brunei Darussalam): I have the honour of speaking on agenda item 66 on behalf of the 10 States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam and my own country, Brunei Darussalam.

We too would like to thank the Secretary-General for his latest report (A/72/223) on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which provides valuable and practical insights on the way forward. We acknowledge the progress made in achieving the priorities set by NEPAD. That is particularly noteworthy against the backdrop of the current unfavourable global economic conditions, as well as persistent challenges in the areas of agricultural productivity and food security, economic diversification and market access, and the lack of financing and capacity, among other things.

As sustainable development and sustaining peace are mutually reinforcing, it is important to safeguard advances in socioeconomic development through the promotion of sustainable peace. In that regard, it is encouraging to see many African countries continue to intensify their efforts and seize opportunities to accelerate progress towards durable peace, security and development in the region.

ASEAN reaffirms its solidarity with Africa, especially with respect to realizing our shared aspirations for growth, prosperity and sustainable development. As such, ASEAN fully supports the implementation of NEPAD, which will provide a strong foundation for Africa's Agenda 2063. We welcome the efforts by the African Union and the United Nations system under the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa to align the Agenda 2063 and the Agenda for Sustainable Development. We are pleased to note that their meeting in Senegal last March focused on investing in youth, who represent a key driving force for inclusive and sustainable development in Africa, where the world's youngest population is concentrated.

In ASEAN, we are also exploring ways and means of promoting synergies and complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the 2030 Agenda. Recently, on the margins of the high-level general debate, ASEAN, together with the United Nations Development Programme, launched the ASEAN My World survey. That project aims to capture the people's perspective on progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and to mobilize and build dialogue between decision-makers and people, with a view to shaping recommendations and policies on how to implement the 2030 Agenda. We therefore believe that there is ample scope for greater collaboration between ASEAN and Africa to address mutual concerns and achieve sustainable development.

ASEAN and African countries have an enduring friendship that is guided by the spirit of solidarity for peace and prosperity. That friendship dates back to the 1955 Bandung Conference. Two years ago, we met again in Indonesia to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of that historic occasion and revitalize our political, economic and sociocultural cooperation.

Enhancing people-to-people linkages is a key aspect of that partnership, which brings professionals, business people, students and travellers from both regions closer together. ASEAN, both as a whole and as individual member States, stands ready to exchange ideas and share experiences with our African partners in various fields, such as agriculture, education, information and communications-technology innovation, trade and infrastructure development.

A supportive international environment is vital for catalysing further development in Africa. In that regard, development partners, international financial institutions, regional and subregional organizations and the international community, especially the United Nations, must redouble their efforts to ensure that African countries achieve sustainable peace and development.

In conclusion, ASEAN is committed to supporting the endeavours of our African friends and the international community to bring about meaningful progress in the implementation of Agenda 2063 for the benefit of Africa.

Mr. Prasad (India): We are meeting at a time when all of us have embarked on the journey towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was adopted two years ago. Our African partners have also commenced the first phase of the implementation of the more long-term African Agenda 2063. Agenda 2063 is mutually reinforced by the 2030 Agenda and

builds on the core priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which came into existence 16 years ago.

International cooperation remains a critical element in Africa's efforts to achieve the greater peace and prosperity envisaged in the two Agendas. NEPAD is an important part of those collaborative efforts. Africa has made rapid strides in recent years. Compared with even a decade ago, the continent is more peaceful. Its governance institutions are stronger. Its overall economic output has grown. Poverty rates have fallen. Infrastructure and connectivity are improving, and the economies are more diversified. In several countries, the service sectors, including banking, telecommunications and retail, have been growing, in spite of the fact that low commodity prices have adversely impacted many economies.

Life expectancy has increased. Rates of infant and maternal mortality have fallen. Primary-school enrolment, especially for girls, has increased. Malnutrition has been reduced, and access to safe drinking water has increased. HIV infection and prevalence rates have been reversed, as noted by the Secretary-General in his remarks earlier this week at the opening of Africa Week 2017.

Today, Africa is a young continent with a demographic dividend that can be of great advantage if young people are provided with education and the skills needed for economic opportunities. International cooperation can help overcome constraints posed by poor connectivity and infrastructure, low agriculture productivity, the lack of diversification in certain economies and limited regional integration.

We commend the organization of the ongoing Africa Week. It helps focus attention on the opportunities and challenges faced by Africa. It would also help to engage United Nations entities in effective partnerships for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

Long-standing trade and diaspora links across the Indian Ocean, a shared colonial past and our common development challenges have framed India's relationship with Africa. Today, Africa and India represent young and dynamic societies and economies that are intensifying their collaboration so as to achieve greater prosperity for their peoples in an increasingly globalized world. The core strengths of our development partnership have been capacity-building, mobilizing financial support and the sharing of technical expertise. That complements our rapidly growing trade and investment links.

Trade between Africa and India has increased by a factor of 20 in the past 15 years and doubled in the past five years, reaching nearly $72 billion in 2016 and making India Africa's fourth-largest trading partner. Indian investment in Africa has also surged, with major investments in the telecommunications, information technology, energy, engineering, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and automobile sectors.

Indian leaders continue to attach a very high priority to our partnership with Africa. Earlier in October, Africa was the destination for the first overseas visit by the new President of India, His Excellency Mr. Ram Nath Kovind. During the past three years, the top leadership of India, including the President, Vice-President and Prime Minister, have visited 18 African countries. Indian ministers have visited all 54 partner countries during that period. In a significant development, the African Development Bank held its board meeting in India this year. During the meeting, Prime Minister Modi announced the launch of India's latest initiative in Africa, the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor, established in partnership with Japan.

We have also had 11 incoming visits by African Heads of State and Government, in addition to the landmark Third India-Africa Forum Summit, held two years ago in Delhi, where 41 African Heads of State and Government participated. During the Summit, the Government of India announced significant offers of development partnership, including $10 billion in concessional credits, as well as grant assistance of $600 million and 50,000 scholarships over the next five years.

India has also engaged with the Group of 20 and the Brazil, Russia, India and China group on issues regarding the development priorities of Africa. Besides the wide-ranging development and humanitarian assistance efforts, India also partners with Africa in promoting peace and security through its long-standing contribution to peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. Recent initiatives have also included trilateral cooperation, along with the United States of America, to provide United Nations peacekeeping training for African partners.

I would like to conclude by reiterating what Prime Minister Modi said during the Africa Development Bank Board meeting in India this year, which is that

India's partnership with Africa is based on a model of cooperation. It is responsive to the needs of African countries, demand-driven and free of conditions.

The long-standing India-Africa partnership is based on solidarity and mutual respect and is neither prescriptive nor exploitative. It represents South-South cooperation in all its dimensions, one that continues to contribute to the implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.

Mr. Almunayer (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation has the honour to participate in this debate on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). We have considered with great interest the content of the Secretary-General's report (A/72/223) of 28 July, entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: fifteenth consolidated progress report on implementation and international support". The report focuses on political measures taken by African countries and organizations to implement NEPAD, as well as the commitments announced to assist African States, the progress they have made and the challenges they face. It also focuses on progress made to implement the NEPAD Agenda, including the need to sustain and forge partnerships aimed at addressing issues of States' national security.

Two years ago, Africa saw the launch of two historic agendas, one global and the other continental. The first is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the second is the 2063 Agenda of the African Union. Both provide long-term development visions. We hope that the objectives of those visions will be implemented to advance Africa. The first 10-year implementation plan was adopted in June 2015 to implement the 2063 Agenda of the African Union, and there will be other strategies in the next 50 years.

The harmony and interdependence of those two Agendas provide a common path for implementing the objectives that Africa aspires to reach. That is reflected in the Secretary-General's report, as are the challenges facing Africa, notably insufficient financial support, the spread of weapons and transnational organized crime, as well as trafficking in natural resources.

We are very concerned about the unfavourable economic circumstances that stand in the way of implementing the 2030 Agenda and the NEPAD Agenda. They tend to undermine the progress made in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, despite the gains made so far. I would like to emphasize the need to implement the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report, in particular those on good governance, the rule of law and the empowerment and protection of the rights of African women in order to enhance peacebuilding efforts and implement the objective of an Africa free from conflicts.

Kuwait prides itself on its historical relations with Africa, and we are an observer member of the African Union. In 2013, we hosted the third Africa Arab Summit, under the theme "Partners in Development and Investment". At the Summit, Amir Sabah Al-Ahmad al-Sabah announced the provision of concessionary loans to non-Arab African countries through the Kuwait Development Fund. During the Summit, Kuwait also announced the investment of $1 billion through the General Investment Authority in collaboration with the World Bank and its institutions, as well as the China-Africa Development Fund, to invest in the infrastructure of Africa.

The loans provided by the Kuwait Development Fund have reached $20 billion so far. Loans have been granted to 106 countries worldwide; African countries alone have received 18 per cent of that amount. It is also important to mention the initiative of the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad al-Sabah, which provides an annual award of $1 million in the name of Mr. Abdul Rahman Al-Sumait, the late Kuwaiti doctor who was active in humanitarian affairs and activities in Africa. The annual award is given for development research in Africa and under the supervision of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences. Kuwait will also host a conference for supporting education in Somalia in the near future, as we believe in the need to promote education towards a future that meets the aspirations of the Somali people and in a manner that keeps abreast of modern developments.

I would like to emphasize that, given our historical bonds and common destiny, the international community, international organizations and non-governmental organizations in the private sector must act vigorously to support the needs of Africa and assist them in implementing their aspirations to achieve development and economic prosperity.

Mrs. Rugwabiza (Rwanda): At the outset, Rwanda thanks you, Mr. President, for convening this important joint debate. We also thank the Secretary-General for

the reports submitted under agenda item 13 (A/72/223 and A/72/269) to inform today's meeting.

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, the world and the African continent set forth ambitious strategic frameworks for a socioeconomic transformation. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda establishes a strong foundation to support the implementation of both Agendas by aligning all financing flows and policies with economic and social priorities.

The Kigali Amendment to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change reinforces the Agendas by setting environmental targets and time frames. My delegation recognizes the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency's efforts aimed at strengthening capacities at the continental, national and regional levels, as we assert that efficient, robust and coordinated efforts are imperative for the successful implementation of the two Agendas.

Throughout the continent, notable socioeconomic progress has been achieved since 2015. In that regard, we congratulate the African Union and the NEPAD Agency on the finalization of the Tripartite Free Trade Area Agreement in July. That marked the beginning of the operationalization of the Agreement, namely, the implementation of flagship projects of the programme for infrastructure development in Africa.

The agricultural sector is an important one for Africa's sustainable development. Achieving impactful agricultural transformation will necessitate strong coordination between partners in country-led processes. Renewed partnerships built on mutual accountability will help Governments, the private sector, civil society, farmers and farmers' cooperatives, as well as development partners, to deliver on the results needed to reach the targets set by the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods. In that regard, we note the efforts of the African Union to strengthen mutual accountability through the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme partnership platform.

Despite notable advancements, the African continent continuously faces systemic challenges. Investing in people-centred development on the continent will require cross-sectoral inclusive policies to provide youth and women equal opportunities to take part in the prosperity of The Africa We Want Agenda. We note the continental education strategy for Africa and the gender-equality strategy, which are the blueprints for mainstreaming and scaling up education and the promotion of gender and women's empowerment. Furthermore, the African Peer Review Mechanism demonstrates the valuable African efforts that have been made to prevent conflict by addressing the root causes and drivers of conflict. Through initiatives such as Silence the Guns by 2020, the African continent has underscored the nexus between security and development and the importance of conflict prevention and response to early-warning signals with rapid intervention to protect civilians.

The Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security is an important blueprint for boosting the coordination between the two organizations at all levels. The implementation of the United Nations and the African Union's development agendas through the pillars provided by the NEPAD Agency will be realized only if the global commitment of leaving no one behind is upheld through mutually reinforcing partnerships. A revitalized global partnership for development is therefore an indispensable ingredient for success. In that regard, we congratulate both the United Nations and the African Union for the reforms that each is undertaking to recalibrate and become fit for purpose so as to be able to competently support the collective efforts of African Member States to achieve the complementary agendas of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

Lastly, on the progress on implementing the programme of the 2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa, Rwanda is committed to working alongside other African Member States to eradicate malaria by shifting the paradigm from malaria control and prevention activities to a scaled-up targeted identification and response, where enhanced malaria surveillance and responses will prevent infection and shrink the malaria map across the continent.

Mr. Annakou (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this important meeting. At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for the two reports on development in Africa (A/72/223 and A/72/269). I would also like to thank Mr. Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), for his efforts to support the African continent.

My country's delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Group of African States.

This plenary meeting on NEPAD is being held two years after the adoption by world leaders of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is based on the idea of leaving no one behind. This meeting is also taking place following the adoption by African leaders of Agenda 2063, which provides a 50-year plan for peace, security and development in Africa, and following the adoption of the African Union's first 10-year plan. Agenda 2063 is centred around people, who are both the instruments and the goals of development. In order to move from planning to comprehensive and integrated implementation, NEPAD and African regional economic commissions must play a central role in aligning the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union's 10-year action plan in order to implement those goals and targets at the national and regional levels, while taking into account the national, cultural and religious specificities of the people of the continent. In that regard, we stress the importance of coordinated integration in Africa. That requires integration first at the national level and then at the regional level, and the regions must also work together to ensure integration throughout the continent.

Despite all the efforts deployed throughout the continent and the progress made in certain areas with the support of development partners, the African continent faces many challenges in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including poverty, violence, conflicts, climate change, capital outflows, migration and many others. The continent also suffers from high unemployment levels; poor education levels, both quantitatively and qualitatively; and a lack of basic services, such as electricity, water and sanitation.

As we face those challenges, developed countries must honour the commitments they made at the main United Nations conferences on Africa. They must also support African countries in strengthening economic stability and help them to attract investment. That will contribute to capacity-building in Africa without exhausting the continent's natural resources. That will lead to true human-resource development in Africa and must also involve the private sector, so as to facilitate technology transfers, especially in food security and infrastructure, and empower youth and women so that they can gain the necessary competencies to fully carry out the SDGs.

With regard to peace and security in Africa, many countries on our continent, including my country, Libya, continue, regrettably, to suffer from a deteriorating security situation and armed conflicts. In that regard, we stress the intrinsic link between security and development. There can be no development without security and no security without development. That is why we must urgently support the countries facing challenges or recently emerging from conflict, so as to improve stability and security and prevent conflicts, maintain peace and improve conditions after conflicts have ended. Indeed, the African continent cannot move forward economically or developmentally without enjoying peace, security and stability and without a strengthened rule of law, good governance and respect for human rights.

My country, Libya, like many other countries, is a transit country for migrants and is suffering from instability owing to significant flows of illegal migration, as well as transnational crime, human trafficking and other issues, which are all the result of challenges relating to border control. In that connection, I affirm that migration is an international multidimensional problem and not merely a national or regional one. We must not place the responsibility for solving it on countries of transit. We must address the root causes of the problem, not its symptoms, in order to bring about development in countries of origin, with the support of destination countries, through technology transfers and by strengthening capacity-building, creating decent working conditions, supporting small and medium-sized enterprises and working to combat the organizations and groups involved in trafficking in migrants in countries of origin and destination.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda focus on the need to mobilize financial resources to achieve the SDGs. In that connection, we must note that many developing countries, especially in Africa, including Libya, are losing part of their wealth owing to illicit financial outflows, both on the continent and beyond. The countries to which those funds have been sent must therefore work to detect where those funds are situated and return them to their countries of origin, so that the latter will be able to benefit from them and finance their development plans and their infrastructure.

In order to combat the problem, we must take the following measures.

First, States Members of the United Nations, especially African countries, should not serve as financial havens for those funds. We must put an end to the illicit financial flows and stop encouraging corruption. The question is, if developed countries did not provide corrupt organizations with secure financial havens, would that corruption be able to persist and develop exponentially to its current level, which is valued in trillions of dollars, according to estimates of the United Nations and the international financial organizations?

Secondly, those same countries that have received such illicit funds must work to resolve the problem by identifying where those monies are and encouraging bilateral cooperation with the countries of origin of those funds so that they can be recovered. Only 3 per cent of the funds that have been covertly smuggled out have been returned to the countries of origin, and that despite the protocols and conventions aimed at combating corruption.

Thirdly, we must establish a global mechanism to combat financial smuggling and to facilitate the return of such funds to the countries of origin. The United Nations system, including its entities and institutions, must collaborate with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to accelerate the implementation of such a mechanism, which must be adopted and respected by countries in developing and developed countries, as well as by financial organizations.

In conclusion, let us translate our words into actions. We must have the genuine political will to take the practical measures needed to combat the ongoing haemorrhaging of the funds of developing countries in Africa and throughout the world. I hope we are not obliged to meet again next year to discuss this agenda item and repeat the same words and declarations without having made any tangible progress on that very important and urgent issue.

Mr. Plasai (Thailand): The Kingdom of Thailand aligns itself with the statements delivered by the Permanent Representative of Brunei Darussalam on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Africa has come a long way. With abundant natural resources and vast potential, the continent is now one of the fastest-growing regions of the world. Over the decades, Africa has also worked successfully to deal with various challenges of a political, economic or social nature. Thailand commends the role of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in fostering integration and development in Africa by enhancing trade flows, the movement of people, the development of human resources, youth and women's empowerment, as well as environmental and food security. Thailand also congratulates the African Union on its fifty-fourth anniversary this year. We support NEPAD's first 10-year plan on the way towards achieving Agenda 2063 of the African Union, as it provides a joint comprehensive vision for an integrated and prosperous Africa.

In recent years, our world has faced increasing acts of violence, particularly against women and children, terrorism, conflicts and political instability. That has undermined progress towards development in many countries and regions, including Africa. Now more than ever, we need to come together to address the root causes of those problems, namely, poverty and social inequality. More importantly, it is imperative for the international community to join hands in helping countries in post-conflict situations ensure a smooth transition and sustain peace through effective peacebuilding and reconstruction.

Asia and Africa have faced similar development challenges, be it in achieving sustainable agriculture, ensuring equal and universal access to health care or strengthening infrastructure development. As Thailand has now become a donor country, we are committed to extending our regular support and assistance to Africa through various forms of cooperation, including scholarships, training and local-to-local knowledge transfers. Thailand also ranks first among ASEAN countries as a trading partner with Africa and third in term of investment in the continent.

We have redefined our cooperation with Africa on the basis of trust and mutual interests under the Thailand-Africa Partnership for Sustainable Development scheme. The main purpose is to share with our African friends the philosophy of His Majesty the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej — the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy — our home-grown approach to sustainable development. We believe that philosophy can be adapted to meet the needs of Africa in the areas of agriculture, public health and human-resources development, among others, especially in rural areas.

Today, 21 countries have developed cooperation with Thailand through projects under the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for Sustainable Development Goals Partnership. In Africa, Sufficiency Economy Philosophy projects have been successfully launched and implemented in Lesotho and Swaziland, and new projects will start this year in Mozambique and Senegal.

At the interregional and multilateral levels, we give priority to and participate in international forums to promote Africa's development, such as the Asia-Africa Conference, the Tokyo International Conference on African Development and the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership. Those consultation and cooperation processes will help pave the way for all of us to achieve our common goals of sustainable development.

On our path towards sustainable development, one of the most challenging tasks at hand is to eradicate pandemics, which continue to leave people in developing and least-developed nations in dire need of access to appropriate health care. A part of Thailand's dedicated work in health care has been on combating epidemics in developing nations, particularly malaria, in order to contribute to creating a healthy population in the Asian region and beyond. Thailand's efforts in the past decade to control the outbreak of malaria have yielded some positive results. We will continue our work and have put in place a 10-year National Strategic Plan for Malaria Elimination (2017-2026), with the target of complete elimination by 2024.

Thailand has been sharing and will continue to share its experience and know-how with its African friends in health care through human-resources development, particularly in the fields related to preventing and curing epidemics, as well as the management of health care in rural areas.

In conclusion, Thailand stands ready to cooperate and work closely with our African friends so that together we can achieve sustainable development, leaving no one behind. Once again we reaffirm our solidarity with Africa. We hope that our continued support will continue to contribute to development in Africa in a meaningful way. We also hope that it will truly help improve the livelihood and welfare of the African peoples.

Ms. Furman (Israel): African States continue to demonstrate drive and resilience, with the African gross domestic product growing significantly faster than the global average over the past decade. Africa's rapid modernization has laid the groundwork for expanding global partnerships that will spur the momentum of development and help bring regional stability.

The relationship between Israel and Africa has never been stronger. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited Africa several times over the past two years and has hosted numerous African leaders in Jerusalem. In June 2017, the Israeli Prime Minister joined the leaders of 15 West African States in Liberia for the fifty-first Summit of the Economic Community of West African States, and in July 2016 Prime Minister Netanyahu visited Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda and Ethiopia accompanied by business leaders from more than 60 companies in order to strengthen economic ties. During those visits, agriculture, health, innovation, energy and counter-terrorism were key items on the agenda.

The theme of the current, seventy-second session of the General Assembly is "Focusing on people: Striving for peace and a decent life for all on a sustainable planet". It is in that spirit that we need to focus on the things that we have in common, which are what unite us. African nations face many of the same challenges as Israel and must use human capital to create sustainable solutions.

Sustainable development in Israel relies on what the Secretary-General calls Israel's "knowledge-based economy", that is, the minds of our people. African nations must groom young people to think critically and creatively — especially given the fact that 60 per cent of the continent is under the age of 24 — as they, like all nations, must rely on human capacity, rather than scarce resources, to build thriving knowledge-based economies.

Through Israel's Agency for Development Cooperation, Israel works with African partner countries, United Nations agencies, civil society and the private sector to further education and training, which is a key platform in the Secretary-General's progress report on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (A/72/223). Israel's Agency for Development Cooperation programmes are based on a "train the trainers" approach to institutional and human capacity-building, with professional training courses conducted in Israel and on site.

In December 2016, Israel hosted a three-day ministerial conference with African agriculture ministers. That was followed by a training session on

applied research in agriculture for agriculture experts. In March 2017, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, we hosted a large delegation from Africa for a study tour on green growth and climate change in arid lands, topics of concern for both Israel and African nations. Knowledge gained from those seminars will be useful in making progress on the African Union's vision for providing support for 25 million farming households so that they can employ climate-smart agricultural practices by 2025.

Whether it be running seminars on entrepreneurship, partnering with UNICEF schools to teach children about innovation and technology, joining with UN-Women to build programmes on women's economic empowerment or establishing emergency trauma units and conducting medical operations to alleviate blindness, the Government of Israel and our civil society are making a real difference in the lives of people across Africa and its youth in particular.

While time does not permit me to elaborate on all of the projects and partnerships between African States and Israel, I want to highlight one in particular. The Israeli non-governmental organization (NGO) Innovation Africa is on a mission to bring innovative Israeli solar energy and water technologies to remote African villages. Active in over eight African countries, that Israeli NGO has already provided 1 million people across Africa with access to light and water.

Israel's commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union Agenda 2063 focuses on sharing best practices through global partnerships. Through the exchange of ideas and strategies, our nations can address mutual challenges together using sustainable solutions. We stand with our African partners to build a brighter future.

Mr. Kononuchenko (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Despite continued weak global economic growth and the many crisis situations on the continent, African countries have demonstrated a resolute commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 of the African Union. Significant efforts have been focused on elaborating national political strategies for mobilizing domestic resources, broadening private-public partnerships and simplifying investment legislation.

It is troubling to see that the Secretary-General's latest progress report (A/72/223) notes a 3 per cent decrease in foreign direct investment on the continent in 2016. We are of the view that African countries need support to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, without which the threat of reversing the progress achieved in recent years is very real.

The Russian Federation takes a responsible approach to its role as a partner for African development and plans to continue to increase its cooperation with the continent. Russia continuously provides intergovernmental assistance through initiatives aimed at assisting the poorest, highly indebted countries and has forgiven more than $20 billion in African debt. Moreover, it uses innovative mechanisms to ease the debt burden through debt-for-development schemes. Such agreements have been signed with Tanzania, Zambia, Mozambique and Ethiopia.

As a donor facilitating international development, our country is carrying out projects to ensure food security and to improve industrial and transport infrastructure through response programmes, funds and other specialized United Nations bodies. One of the key channels for that is the World Food Programme. In 2017, the recipients of Russian assistance were Namibia, Kenya, Somalia, and the Sudan.

We support the community health-care sector: in 2015, the Russian Federation was one of the first to react and respond to the Ebola fever outbreak by allocating more than $60 million. At the medical centre opened by Russia in Guinea, a vaccine developed in our country is being tested, with professional training courses being held for local specialists. That is particularly important for improving the response to outbreaks of infectious diseases. Through UNICEF, more than $5 million has been allocated for a vaccine campaign in Angola to protect people from yellow fever.

We consider that the World Health Assembly's decision to appoint a representative of Africa — Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus — as the new Director-General of the World Health Organization was a timely one. Russia has supported South Africa's initiative to organize a high-level meeting to combat tuberculosis in 2018. We plan to participate actively in the preparations for that meeting by holding a global ministerial conference on the topic in Moscow on 16 and 17 November, in which we invite Member States to take part.

Africa's future development largely depends on the development of the continent's production capacity

and trade opportunities. Our delegation accordingly endorsed the adoption of the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa. In our view, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization will play a key role in carrying out the work of that 10-year plan.

Industrialization is impossible without ensuring that States on the continent have access to cutting-edge technologies. We therefore value establishing a technology bank for least-developed countries. In order to integrate Africa into international markets, it is clear that greater attention must be paid to developing its infrastructure. In that regard, we welcomed the opening of the regional central branch of the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa Development Bank in Johannesburg. We trust that it will generate additional opportunities for the entire continent with regard to establishing and implementing large-scale infrastructure projects. That is fully in line with plans set out in the Group of 20 Communiqué at the Hangzhou Summit, which was aimed at supporting inclusive and sustainable structural transformations in Africa.

We believe that the continent has enormous potential in terms of both natural and human resources. It would be a grave error not to use them for the benefit of all humankind. We therefore call on the international community, in particular the United Nations system, to provide the necessary assistance to the region so as to implement the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

Mr. Laassel (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): The Kingdom of Morocco aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Group of African States.

The Moroccan delegation welcomes the adoption of the Framework for a Renewed United Nations-African Union Partnership on Africa's Integration and Development Agenda 2017-2027, and hopes that the Framework, which will provide the road map for strengthening cooperation between the two organizations, will be able to draw on effective monitoring mechanisms so as to ensure the achievement of the development goals set out by the African Union's Agenda 2063. In that regard, my delegation remains convinced that only joint African efforts based on strong regional coordination will enable African countries to overcome the challenges they face relating to sustainable development and peace and security.

As the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/223) on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has underscored, despite the progress made in recent years in the areas of economic and social development, obstacles continue to impede efforts to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to implement Agenda 2063. Among those obstacles is the problem of financing the implementation of the NEPAD programme, which, if left unresolved, could hinder the achievement of the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063. Indeed, the financing capacity of most African Governments is limited.

That situation is aggravated by a situation where we have a scarcity of funding resources, international financial markets that are difficult to access, and a decrease in official development assistance. It is therefore important to establish, together with African countries, a new phase of international cooperation and partnership for sustainable development in its three dimensions based on the principle of shared but differentiated responsibilities so as to create more opportunities for enlisting the necessary financial resources.

In that context, my delegation believes that encouraging investment, developing infrastructure, improving market access, and facilitating technology transfer and debt relief are key to achieving the economic emergence of African countries. Moreover, strengthening the private sector will help diversify African economies, improve added value and create employment and income opportunities. It is also important that the pledges made in connection with official development assistance, which is a significant source of financing for development — especially for least-developed African countries — be honoured.

Adapting agriculture in Africa is an essential component for ensuring food security. For that reason, appropriately adapting agriculture requires the implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change through capacity-building, technology transfer, and the financing of climate-related activities. The twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 22), held in Marrakech, provided an opportunity for a broader discussion on how to involve all governmental and non-governmental actors, including financial institutions, in climate-related activities.

In that context, the solemn declaration adopted by African leaders and Heads of State at the African Action

Summit, held on the sidelines of COP 22, reflects the commitment of African leaders to defend their shared stance on combating climate change and its effects, particularly desertification. In that spirit, my country has facilitated the initiative known as the Adaptation of African Agriculture, which is aimed at developing solutions based on resilience for farmers across the African continent, while taking into account the impact of climate change on agriculture.

Morocco has promoted South-South cooperation and the development of intra-African trade and investment as a fundamental pillar of its economic cooperation policy in its sphere of influence in Africa. Accordingly, Morocco has launched partnerships and cooperation programmes together with African countries in numerous areas, such as education, health, infrastructure, agriculture and vocational training. In addition, Morocco's relations with the African continent have enjoyed unprecedented growth over the last decade, thanks to the numerous visits made by His Majesty King Mohammed VI to several African countries, thereby strengthening our relations. At the same time, together with the cooperative efforts initiated by the Moroccan Government and the Moroccan Agency for International Cooperation with the countries of Africa, Moroccan private enterprises have increased their investments in key development sectors on the continent, such as air and sea transport, banking, housing, telecommunications and tourism.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Morocco's commitment to strengthening South-South and triangular cooperation, which encourages partnerships that promote financing, spur growth and create jobs so as to achieve the priority goals of the African continent. Morocco will also be active in supporting efforts aimed at significantly contributing to the implementation of NEPAD and Agenda 2063 programmes, based on an integrated and coherent approach aimed at implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and bringing about a lasting peace that prioritizes prevention by addressing the root causes of conflict.

Ms. Krisnamurthi (Indonesia): Indonesia aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Brunei Darussalam on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. My delegation wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his reports (A/72/223 and A/72/269), which highlight the progress achieved in the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the major developments regarding peace and security and their interlinkage with sustainable development in Africa, respectively.

The impacts of the global financial crisis continue to cast a shadow over many countries. The pace of recovery is uneven across the globe, even as we witnessed a modest strengthening of global economic activities in the beginning of 2017. Growth on the African continent is expected to reach 2.6 per cent this year, but there needs to be more rapid growth so that African countries can accelerate their efforts to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Prior to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, African countries had already set their own developmental targets under the African Union's Agenda 2063. We must now strive together and synergize efforts to achieve the targets for the people in Africa. The pursuit of sustainable development in Africa should be a collective endeavour. We all share the responsibility to ensure that African countries are not left behind. To that end, my delegation would like to highlight the following points.

First, we must enhance international cooperation so as to mobilize financing for development in Africa. The Secretary-General's latest report on progress in implementing NEPAD (A/72/223) noted that financing remains a serious challenge to the implementation of the NEPAD agenda and, unless addressed, is likely to pose challenges to the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well. The continuous provision of technical assistance and capacity-building is needed to mobilize domestic resources and combat illicit financial flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets, broaden tax bases and attract investment.

Equally crucial is the fulfilment of all official development assistance commitments and other concessional financing by development partners. Efforts must be made to preserve the debt-sustainability of African countries, especially those impacted by conflicts and natural disasters, thus freeing up resources for development and poverty eradication.

Secondly, we must promote initiatives that generate inclusive and sustained growth. The importance of infrastructure in promoting the integration of the global economy cannot be overstated. Infrastructure-development projects in African countries must be supported. We must foster partnerships to support industrialization in Africa in

line with the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa for the period 2016-2025, recognizing its potential to generate employment, increase income and further economic diversification.

Thirdly, we must strive to enhance collaboration between the United Nations and the African continent in the area of sustainable development. NEPAD and the African Union's Agenda 2063 are integral to the United Nations 2030 Agenda. Indonesia looks forward to the further mainstreaming of those strategies in the operational activities of the United Nations development system, and we also look forward to the Secretary-General's December report on how the United Nations must be repositioned to better support national efforts, including those of African countries, in achieving the SDGs.

Indonesia has always been a true partner of African countries, including in their struggle for independence, as manifested by the convening of the Asian-African Conference in 1955 in Bandung. Indonesia co-initiated the New Asia Africa Strategic Partnership to promote cooperation in various fields between the two regions. African countries are among the top recipients of Indonesia's South-South cooperation programme, which is based on the principles of equality, mutual respect and non-conditionality, and is demand-driven.

At the Group of 20 Summit in Hamburg this year, our President announced his intention to further transform political ties between Indonesia and Africa into concrete economic ties. To that end, Indonesia will host the Indonesia-Africa Forum in 2018 to explore economic opportunities, strengthen technical cooperation and enhance the existing partnership between both sides.

Mr. Gumende (Mozambique): Allow me to start by congratulating Mr. David Mehdi Hamam, Acting Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Africa, and his staff for the successful convening of Africa Week 2017, an annual event that brings together all relevant stakeholders in the quest for ways and means to advance synergies and partnerships aimed at addressing the prevailing challenges afflicting the development of African countries and their peoples.

I also take this opportunity to thank Secretary-General António Guterres for the two reports under consideration (A/72/223 and A/72/269), as they provide a clear picture of the efforts undertaken by African countries and their partners, including the United Nations system, to implement the commitments under the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Union's Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. The complementarity between those continental instruments and the United Nations Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development is also very well highlighted.

I seize this opportunity to express the alignment of Mozambique with the statement delivered by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Group of African States.

Since its inception, the New Partnership for Africa's Development has provided us with exceptional opportunities to improve capacities and policies, with a view to delivering results in important socioeconomic areas and promoting public and private partnerships that add to the growing confidence in our ability to lead Africa on the path to socioeconomic development, peace and stability.

The adoption of Agenda 2063 and the approval of its 13 flagship projects also bear witness to our resolve to be the subjects and owners of our own destinies. We believe that the strategic impacts of those home-grown solutions will provide quick wins, with the potential to improve the positive trends in Africa with regard to its economic growth rates, political stability and the strengthening of democratic institutions and results in the social sphere. In our endeavours, the support of development partners is key to helping Africa successfully address the prevailing challenges.

Therefore, while we are encouraged by the modest increase in the levels of official development assistance to Africa, from $15.3 billion in 2014 to $56.6 billion in 2015, we are concerned by the fact that, since 2010, the increase has been due mainly to the cost of humanitarian aid and the hosting of refugees in donor countries. In addition, the continued decline in foreign direct investment (FDI) flows to Africa is a source of concern, given its role in the development of infrastructure. We therefore look at the financial commitments made at United Nations conferences, including in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, with hope.

The call for action to implement Agenda 2063 reminds us that agriculture continues to be a major driver of development and source of livelihood in Africa, particularly in rural areas, where the majority of our people live. In that vein, our efforts to eradicate poverty also address the need to modernize agriculture.

Experience proves that, with the right policies and support, progress in promoting sustainable agriculture and combating malnutrition is possible.

Therefore, at the national level, our 2015-2019 five-year agricultural plan was defined as the basis for development, owing to the fact that 88 per cent of Mozambicans rely on agriculture. Therefore, the Strategic Plan for the Development of the Agrarian Sector (PEDSA) for 2011-2020 strongly supports the family sector, which still comprises the largest number of agricultural workers. PEDSA also includes high-productivity farming systems in the six sectors that work with regional and international markets. With PEDSA, we also aim to support food production and cash crops so as to supply agriculture inputs, crop protection, institutional capacity and the promotion of research on the agriculture sector.

We are committed to continuing to encourage the participation of various stakeholders, including women and youth. In our view, community empowerment is essential, owing to the capacity that it provides in improving the welfare of the most vulnerable and protecting the environment.

As part of food security and nutrition policies, Mozambique established a national coordination framework, whose priority actions include: increasing local production of adequate food to meet nutritional needs in terms of quantity and quality, improving the capacity of individuals and families to provide sufficient resources to purchase food suitable for their needs, strengthening nutrition surveillance systems, improving the access of households to sources of safe drinking water and energy resources, creating and controlling food standards that ensure food safety and good human nutrition, including food and nutrition security and the human right to adequate food in school curriculums.

Achieving agriculture development and food security and nutrition goals demands investment capacity to create national resilience and holistic, multi-sectoral coordination. It also requires adequate flows of FDI.

As part of our national five-year plan, the Government of Mozambique is fully committed to providing high-quality health care to its people. In fact, the national health system has shown significant improvements over the past decade with efforts to reduce imbalances and improve the availability of drugs. Major progress has also been made in child immunization, and overall access to health services has substantially increased.

Despite that progress, Mozambique still faces daunting challenges in addressing malaria and the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Malaria remains a great concern in our development efforts, as it accounts for a high percentage of Mozambique's disease burden, with children under 5, pregnant women, socially disadvantaged groups and people living with HIV/AIDS being the most vulnerable.

As part of Mozambique's development plan, the Ministry for Health is actively engaged in establishing participative and integrated strategies to mitigate the impact of diseases that directly affect the social and economic structure. It also has a strategy in place that combines efforts to secure more flexible, better trained health personnel, as well as a close-monitoring mechanism for malaria eradication. As a result, Mozambique has made significant steps towards the reduction of malaria incidence and has increased the number of health units capable of performing malaria diagnosis on the spot. Our efforts are geared towards measures aimed at increasing the collective awareness of good practices with a view to eliminating the scourge of malaria.

In efforts to address malaria, partnerships are of the essence. To that end, Mozambique joined the Southern African Development Community's Malaria Elimination Framework, which includes the eight countries that signed the Malaria Elimination Agreement in 2009, setting 2020 as a target for malaria eradication. That regional approach played a pivotal role in strengthening the ongoing transborder initiatives and their sustainability.

Guided by the NEPAD agenda, Mozambique is committed to good governance. In that context, we adhered to the African Peer Review Mechanism in March 2003, followed by the submission of progress reports in 2014 and 2015. The country is undertaking its second evaluation, which will be concluded and submitted by mid-2018.

I would like to conclude this statement by stressing our unwavering commitment to fulfilling the pan-African vision of an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena. That is the Africa we want, this is the Africa we seek to build for the next generations, this is the Africa we hope our

partners will continue to support. The Government of Mozambique remains committed to accelerating and redoubling its efforts.

Mr. Sinirlioğlu (Turkey): I thank you, Sir, for organizing this debate. I congratulate the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa for organizing the 2017 Africa Week at the United Nations. I also thank the Secretary-General for his substantive reports (A/72/223 and A/72/269) on the progress achieved in the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and on the causes of conflict in Africa.

I would like to begin by commending the efforts of the African countries, the African Union and African subregional organizations, including the NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency, which contribute to the development and maintenance of peace and security on the continent. Despite tremendous challenges, Africa is making great strides towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, while trying to find African-led solutions to the ongoing crises in various parts of the continent. Africa's increasing economic growth and its genuine initiatives to prevent and solve its crises deserve the support of the international community.

Turkey's Africa Partnership Policy fully embraces the principle of African solutions to African issues. We believe that the African people and African Governments have the best knowledge and the most suitable answers to their problems. With its expertise and capacity, Turkey remains determined to assist the African countries in their efforts. Turkey, as a strategic partner of Africa, has joined the African countries in their development efforts with substantive infrastructure programmes and projects and humanitarian assistance. Turkey also plays an important part in supporting security and stability in Africa through its participation in United Nations field missions and through its bilateral engagements.

Turkey has diversified and significantly increased its assistance to Africa in recent years. The Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2016 ranked Turkey the second-largest donor country worldwide with its $6 billion in humanitarian spending. Turkey ranks first in terms of its official humanitarian assistance ratio by national income.

Turkey has multiplied its official development assistance to sub-Saharan Africa more than a hundredfold since 2005. While taking critical initiatives to alleviate the suffering of crisis-stricken African nations, Turkey focuses on capacity development and institution-building in many African countries. Turkish development efforts are not limited to infrastructure projects and include capacity-building through education and vocational training, which have a genuine impact.

Those capacity-building efforts stretch across all fields, including macroeconomic management, land surveys, urbanization projects, agricultural productivity, medical treatment and hospital management, communication and information technologies and transport. Education is a field of advanced cooperation between Turkey and its African counterparts. Yesterday, we hosted education ministers from African countries in Istanbul at the Turkey-Africa Education Ministries Conference. Each year, Turkey provides around 1,000 higher-education scholarships to African students. There are several technical training programmes carried out by various Turkish Ministries and Government agencies, either in Turkey or in Africa.

Local capacity increase is key in Turkey's development assistance strategy. For instance, the vocational training centre, established by the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency in Khartoum, provides necessary skill sets for the youth and contributes to the flourishing of local economies. The centre has so far provided training to more than 15,000 young people in 10 different sectors.

Turkey also shares its expertise in agriculture, a key sector for Africa's development, through vocational training programmes, experience-sharing and best-practices courses held in Turkey. Infrastructure projects, such as the construction of roads, ports, irrigation systems and schools, are important for capacity-building and improving basic services, food security and human-resources development in African countries. Turkey provides African Governments and local authorities with grants and technical assistance for infrastructure projects and supports the African private-sector initiatives through EXIMBANK loans and other facilities.

With that understanding, Turkey is building or rehabilitating dams for agricultural irrigation and water management in the Horn of Africa. Our Cooperation Agency, in collaboration with Turkish and local non-governmental organizations, is establishing agriculture schools and greenhouses in Somalia,

Sudan and other parts of Africa. Two research and training hospitals that Turkey constructed in Darfur and Mogadishu in 2014 and 2015, respectively, are good examples of Turkey's determination to fulfil its unwavering commitment to Africa, even under difficult conditions. Turkey also collaborates with African small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to carry out sustainable development projects aimed at strengthening industrialization and job creation in various African countries. In that connection, we also organize training programmes and field trips for African SMEs in Turkey.

We know that overall stabilization and socioeconomic development efforts in Africa cannot succeed without economic empowerment and the active engagement of women and youth. In that context, Turkey implements joint projects with the African Union and African countries for the capacity-building of young entrepreneurs, including women. Turkey organizes comprehensive training programmes and field trips in cooperation with the African Union on entrepreneurship, business start-ups, development and capacity-building. One such event, designed for Somali women and young entrepreneurs, was held within the framework of the Somali High-level Partnership Forum, which took place in Istanbul in 2016. The Bazaar Africa, which opened in 2016, gave visibility to the economic capacity and productivity of African women.

An extensive network composed of 39 Turkish embassies, development agencies across the continent, Turkish Airlines and Turkish businessmen's associations across the continent play an active role in efforts to help African countries tap Africa's real economic and business potential in order to create an environment conducive to peace and prosperity. That network is present in many crisis-affected regions of Africa and is doing a great job for the African people.

Mr. Suan (Myanmar): It has been almost two decades since the inception of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). It is a collective vision and strategic framework for African countries that has the aim of eliminating poverty and achieving a sustainable path of growth and development on the continent.

Over the years, we have witnessed encouraging progress made by many African countries. Nevertheless, many challenges remain to be addressed. Some African countries are still grappling with economic uncertainty, political instability, poor connectivity and infrastructure, climate change and natural disasters, which impede the achievement of sustainable development on the continent.

We are encouraged by the impressive progress made by the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), which focuses on 16 cross-border projects. It will further strengthen connectivity among African countries. The successful implementation of PIDA will contribute to reaching NEPAD's goals of promoting accelerated growth and sustainable development, eradicating widespread and severe poverty, and halting the marginalization of Africa in the globalization process.

Despite the adverse effects that weak global economic conditions have on Africa's growth performance, African countries continue to make progress in the implementation of the priorities of NEPAD, particularly in the areas of infrastructure, agriculture and gender mainstreaming. While some African countries are experiencing infrastructure development, the Secretary-General, in his report on progress in implementing the NEPAD agenda (A/72/223), pointed out that African countries need to undertake the reforms necessary to attract local and foreign private-sector partners for investment in infrastructure, including through the creation of enabling regulatory and legal frameworks. I strongly believe that such reforms will bring more foreign investors to the region. At the same time, I would like to urge development partners to support infrastructure development in Africa through financing and capacity-building.

Asia and Africa are the continents of opportunities and challenges. Given the similarity of the development paths of our two continents, we recognize tremendous potential in our collaboration for mutual benefit in many areas through South-South cooperation and the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership.

Myanmar was one of the leading countries in building friendship and solidarity among Asian and African countries more than six decades ago, as it was one of the organizers for the historic Asian-African Conference, which is better known as the Bandung Conference. As Myanmar and African friends have deep-rooted traditional relationships, Myanmar will continue to stand firmly in supporting NEPAD's

objectives of political stability, high economic growth and sustainable development.

Myanmar, like many countries in Africa, lagged behind in development owing to decades of internal armed conflict. Since the new Government came into office in March 2016, we have set peace and national reconciliation as top priorities, with the aim of establishing a democratic federal union. Significant progress has been achieved in the peace process. Peace and stability are prerequisites for sustainable economic development.

On the economic front, Myanmar has opened its doors to responsible foreign investment, which could provide much-needed employment opportunities. Myanmar's 12-point economic policy has been crafted to achieve many of the Sustainable Development Goals, including poverty alleviation, the enhancement of infrastructure investment, as well as investment in agriculture, the private sector and small and medium-sized enterprises. At the same time, we are reaching out to the international community for a new approach that will deepen engagement and cooperation at both the bilateral and the multilateral levels. Myanmar therefore looks forward to enhancing our engagements with our African friends in their development endeavours within the framework of South-South cooperation.

To conclude, we would like to reiterate our support for the full and effective implementation of NEPAD, the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's Agenda 2063 for promoting peace and development in Africa, while building a mutual understanding that is based on our friendship and cooperation through the Bandung spirit of Afro-Asian solidarity.

Mr. Boukadoum (Algeria): I thank you, Sir, for personally presiding over today's meeting. It shows your interest in Africa, and I would like to convey my thanks for that. The debate on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is very dear and crucial to my continent, and my country cherishes the opportunity to share its views with the entire membership.

I would like to start by saying that in addition to aligning ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Group of African States, I would like to add the following remarks in my national capacity.

We note with appreciation the findings and recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General, in particular the report on progress in the implementation of and international support for NEPAD (A/72/223). We also wish to thank the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa for its dedication and valuable work in enhancing international support for Africa's development. I also wish to commend the work of the Economic Commission for Africa, which has called for enhanced cooperation with the African Union.

As indicated in the Secretary-General's report, African countries are working to mainstream the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's Agenda 2063 into their national development frameworks. While being convinced of the multiple benefits of regional integration, African countries have made significant progress on the establishment of a continental free trade area, which we hope will facilitate economic exchanges, create decent jobs, help to mobilize domestic resources and attract extra-continental flows of funds needed for investments, in particular for infrastructure and development.

Having said that, what is needed most is the concrete mobilization of domestic resources in African countries. The international community should support the continent in achieving a sustainable growth that is based on a domestic production system, an effective tax-collection administration and strengthened capacity-building. Africa needs to benefit from improved market access, particularly to markets in the developed countries, which are called upon to show more openness to supporting Africa's development efforts and its inclusion in the international system. The voices heard in some wealthy countries, calling for economic stabilization measures, could raise some difficulties, as we fear that certain proposed measures will end up creating new obstacles for the effective contribution of Africa to the world economy.

The issue of the transfer of technology remains a long-standing, lingering issue. Productive investment is investment that opens up possibilities for the transfer of technology and is not focused exclusively on material profits or stock dividends.

For more than a decade now, NEPAD has placed the questions of peace, security, democracy, good governance, human rights and women's empowerment at the heart of sustainable development. While recognizing the political, economic and social difficulties that have

beset Africa's development for decades, NEPAD is also the expression of Africa's determination to establish a new partnership anchored in the principles of African leadership and, above all, ownership.

The progress that Africa has achieved finds itself hampered by a variety of factors. The collective actions undertaken by Africa to fight poverty continue to suffer from the backlash caused by a multitude of crises in various parts of Africa, as well as other setbacks resulting from the effects of natural disasters, climate change — to which Africa has contributed the least of any region — and volatile commodity prices. Africa's resilience can and must be strengthened.

The international community can contribute greatly to that process, and we seize this opportunity to call on our partners to fully support the African Union. Let us remember that Agenda 2063 of the African Union and its continental programmes are embedded in NEPAD. After a decade of implementation, NEPAD, as a programme of the African Union, produced a number of encouraging results, including the promotion of infrastructure development.

With respect to the implementation of the Trans-Sahara Highway project championed by Algeria, the part that is to be carried out by my country has recently been completed. That project will link Algeria to Nigeria and will open up the landlocked and deprived areas in between the two countries. It will also certainly be instrumental to free trade and to enhancing economic exchange between the North and the South of the Sahelo-Saharan region. The other project, an optic fibre link between Algeria and Nigeria via the Niger, aimed at connecting Algeria to Nigeria through the installation of 4,500 kilometres of terrestrial optic fibre, will certainly lead to positive spinoffs.

Significant progress has also been made within the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, to which 50 of the 55 States members of the African Union have committed themselves, particularly with regard to implementing national agriculture and food-security investment plans.

Thanks to its immense potential, both in human and natural resources, Africa is the future of the world. Africa is a thriving continent that is on the right track, despite real and evident setbacks and uncertainties. Africa needs to jumpstart its development and has begun to do so thanks to national, regional and continental endeavours. Africa needs to be respected and viewed as a partner, not as a source of problems or a threat to the comfort of others. History shows that the whole world still owes Africa its support in solving its woes, and we expect Member States to provide their cooperation, mutual respect, genuine partnership and solidarity, which are needed now more than ever.

Ms. Guadey (Ethiopia): At the outset, let me thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (A/72/223). Let me also thank the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, the Mission of the African Union, the Economic Commission for Africa, NEPAD and the United Nations Department of Public Information for jointly organizing Africa Week, which has given us a unique opportunity to exchange views on how to accelerate inclusive and sustainable peace and development in Africa. My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the African Group.

Since the dawn of the millennium, Africa has been registering encouraging economic growth, which has reduced poverty. As a result of comprehensive policies implemented at the national, regional and continental levels, Africa continues to be the second-fastest-growing region in the world, meaning that even sceptics recognize it as the hopeful and rising continent.

That does not, of course, mean that Africa was immune to the adverse impacts the 2008 global recession or the impact of the recent global commodity-price volatility, which affected its economic growth. Moreover, despite the progress achieved in the political and socioeconomic areas, Africa still continues to face multiple challenges that require urgent and concerted solutions. That is why the leaders of Africa came together and endorsed Agenda 2063 of the African Union with a political commitment to build an integrated, prosperous and peaceful continent that plays its rightful role at the global level.

Building on the achievements of past endeavours, that ambitious vision of creating the Africa we want for current and future generations demonstrates the unflinching political will and readiness of African leaders to shape the destiny of the continent for a much better and transformed Africa. Now more than ever, Agenda 2063 reflects the shared vision of the people of Africa to fully realize the development potential of the continent, as well as comprehensive political, socioeconomic and cultural development,

while respecting environmental sustainability. Indeed, Agenda 2063 is an African-led and African-owned master plan, and Africans are committed to assuming full responsibility for its implementation in line with varying national and regional circumstances.

The 2063 Agenda is also a comprehensive framework for partnership with the international community and a road map for multi-stakeholder collaboration with the private sector, civil society and other development actors. The African Agenda is also fully aligned with the objectives of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development aimed at realizing prosperity for all and leaving no one behind. Therefore Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda reinforce and complement each other.

In order to fully realize the vision of creating a peaceful and prosperous Africa, it is important to pay special attention to silencing the guns. Africa should leave no stone unturned in working to achieve that, for peace is the prerequisite for Africa's development, which is indispensable for ensuring sustainable peace and security on the continent. In that regard, we have no option but to transform and diversify our economies through inclusive and sustainable industrialization. That should be done in a way that could further translate economic growth into poverty reduction and job creation, as well as into building resilience so as to address the adverse impacts of external shocks and climate change.

While it is the primary responsibility of Africa itself to achieve its development vision, it is clear that, in an interconnected world, Africa requires an enabling and supportive global environment. In that regard, let me emphasize that it is important to enhance financial, technological and capacity-building support for the 2030 and 2063 Agendas in a more coordinated and enhanced manner.

In that regard, we commend the cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations aimed at integrating follow-up and reporting mechanisms. We also believe that cooperation and coordination between the two organizations should be further consolidated so as to achieve both of the development frameworks in line with existing national and regional initiatives. The reform agenda of the United Nations should also consider the special development needs and challenges of Africa.

In conclusion, the messages of the Secretary-General's report and the many useful ideas that we have heard during this Africa Week will help to further foster international partnership in support of the development efforts of Africa. We hope the Week has provided us an opportunity to have productive deliberations between Africa and our development partners, thereby contributing to the accelerated implementation of Agenda 2063.

Mr. Mero (Tanzania): My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Group of African States.

My delegation wishes to commend you, Mr. President, for your statement, which has encouraged Africans to continue to work together to address their own challenges. It is gratifying that the African Union's Agenda 2063, which dovetails with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, is gaining recognition across the globe. We in Africa are determined to eradicate poverty in the short, medium and long term and to guarantee prosperity to our people. Our resolve has come a long way, starting in the African Union and its subregional organizations with their intent to generate African solutions to surmount current and future challenges. We have always addressed our challenges through common purpose and solidarity, be it in the areas of peace and security, or development and environmental issues.

We are determined, through partnerships with the international community, to be able, first, to address the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063; secondly, to ensure that we implement the Paris Agreement on Climate Change; thirdly, to support the Secretary-General's reform agenda; and fourthly, to address the challenges of peace and security through regional initiatives, including through partnerships with the international community and other partners. We continue to believe that addressing infrastructure development on the continent and investing in industrialization and value addition is a step in the right direction. At this juncture, let me thank all cooperating partners for supporting the continent through the peace, security and development agenda. Support from partners is not in vain; it is valued and recognized by all of us.

In conclusion, let us work together in order to support the continent as it seeks to integrate itself into and contribute to the global economic value chain.

Mr. Elnour (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is my pleasure at the outset to stress that we align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Group of African States.

It is also my pleasure to address the Assembly during Africa Week, which supports an integrated, prosperous, people-centred and peaceful Africa. We salute our great fathers and grandfathers. We commend the attention to and focus on people and their role in improving their lives and developing their societies. We believe that it is high time for the United Nations, which adopted its Charter in 1945 with the words "We the peoples", to take the initiative and lead the people to promote their economic, social and cultural rights and to strengthen the pillars of peace and security.

The African continent's contribution to human civilization has been proven since the dawn of time on this Earth. In fact, various cultures and civilizations in various parts of Africa, whether in the north, south, centre, west or east, have promoted human development. Africa was left behind over the past two decades in terms of industrialization and development; yet it has always played its role, and history has proved that Africa set the cornerstone for human civilization. In Africa we have significantly contributed to the great developments of our day.

Unfortunately, over the past several decades, the dark continent has grown into a region of conflicts. In fact, bloody armed conflicts have mushroomed, which has increased the number of fighter and non-fighter victims. Destruction has struck various parts of our continent. We must address the root causes of conflict, such as poverty, the weak rule of law and education opportunities, and the failure to use our resources. Those factors have adversely affected the prosperity and stability of our people. That is why Africa was left behind in development. That is also one of the main causes of conflict.

In addition, emerging reasons for conflict, such as climate change and its significant impact on food security in many developing African countries, especially sub-Saharan Africa, have caused great concern for our people. The international community must work together to avoid the destructive impact of climate change. We hope that the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which includes the African Union's vision of socioeconomic development on the continent, will tackle the root causes of conflict so that Africa may enjoy sustainable peace and development.

We salute and commend the efforts of the African Union, which adopted its ambitious plan: Agenda 2063. That document provides a road map for the development of Africa and for the promotion of its democracy. We also have the pleasure to commend the efforts of regional organizations, which have played a key part in that field, such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, which includes the States of the Horn of Africa. As for the Sudan, we must note that we have made tangible progress in our efforts to end conflict and move towards peacebuilding and sustainable peace in Darfur. We would like to thank all organizations that have contributed to the implementation of the Agreement between the Government of the Sudan and the Liberation and Justice Movement for the adoption of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. That agreement has transformed Darfur from a conflict region to a region of peace, stability and security.

I would also like to commend the national dialogue initiative launched by our Government with the participation of all political forces. That was done in an effective and serious way in order to ensure comprehensive inclusiveness, transparency and freedom, and to address the main problems of the country, while providing a national document that all political parties agreed on. It paved the way for a constitutional and political future in line with consensual visions and ambitions for addressing social, economic and political problems. Its recommendations and decisions were an achievement that led to the establishment of the Government of National Accord, which has been steering the work of our country with participation on the part of all political parties.

In conclusion, we stress the need to redouble African efforts to establish a comprehensive strategic partnership to fight terrorism and ensure political stability on the African continent, in line with the Committee of Intelligence and Security Services of Africa Conference held in Khartoum in September, with the participation of leaders in the fields of intelligence and security in Africa. That will help to achieve the NEPAD agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In fact, there can be no sustainable peace without stability and economic and human development.

The President: I now call on the observer of the African Union.

Mr. Mayaki (African Union): I would first like to convey my warmest congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-second session.

I am very honoured to speak on behalf of the African Union (AU), and I would like to thank the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa for having organized a very successful Africa Week. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which is an African Union programme, is a commitment to action by Africa's leaders. Embedded in Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, adopted by the African Union in 2015, NEPAD continues to be a rallying point in the continent's pursuit of transformation and growth, within particularly key parameters that underline the social and economic empowerment of our people, without exception.

The continent has settled down and is now fully focused on implementing economic growth and development strategies within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As we know, Africa's commitments are also specified in Agenda 2063. During this year's Africa Week, with its theme, "Supporting an integrated, prosperous, people-centred and peaceful Africa: Towards the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to three issues that underline Africa's advances on its socioeconomic pathways.

The first issue is the demographic factor, particularly the issue of youth and youth employment. We know from past experience, especially that of the past decade, that it is not enough for economies to grow in terms of gross domestic product if that growth is not accompanied, at acceptable levels, by growth and transformative change in specific human-development factors — from jobs and economic opportunities to access to education, health, shelter and clean water. With a youthful population that has a current median age of 20 years — expected to rise to 25 years by 2050, which will still be below the global average of 36 years — it is imperative that Africa break the generation-to-generation poverty cycle that continues to trap many of our people.

While significant progress is being made at the continental and regional levels, as well as within individual AU member States, there are challenges remaining. With an average annual growth rate of 2.5 per cent over the past decade, the demographic factors will be central in identifying priority issues and public-policy options with regard to Africa's socioeconomic pathways. It is no accident that, through the theme of this year's AU Summit, "Harnessing the demographic dividend through investments in youth", the African Union dedicated 2017 to making progress on the issue of youth employment. The issue of youth is not a problem to be eliminated, it is a resource — an economic resource to be harnessed.

An estimated 440 million young people will enter the labour market in Africa alone by 2030. The situation of young people is particularly critical in rural areas, where the lack of decent work opportunities remains pervasive. The majority of rural youth are employed in the informal economy as contributing family workers, subsistence farmers, home-based micro-entrepreneurs or unskilled workers, where they typically earn low wages and are employed under seasonal work arrangements and usually in unsafe working conditions.

The African Union Commission, the regional economic communities and the NEPAD Agency are collaborating on several initiatives that seek to bring added value to the actions being taken by AU member States to address, on the one hand, employment creation and entrepreneurship development, and on the other, enhance the employability of the youth through appropriate training. The African Union vocational training and skills-development strategy is already enabling the youth in many African countries by helping them to acquire industry-relevant skills, and in some cases, entrepreneurship and business-management skills. Africa needs to rapidly expand its capacity to offer relevant skills and vocational training to youth and women.

The second issue is that of trade. While global competitiveness and trading with the rest of the world is one of the realities of our globalized world, I would like to focus that issue on Africa's own inter- and intra-regional trade. The potential capacity to have a significant impact on economic growth is massive and evident. Through progress on various trade instruments, from regional instruments to decisions and declarations on boosting intra-African trade and the establishment of a continental free-trade area, Africa has made commendable advances towards making a reality of its clear political ambition to expand the levels of

continental trade. That is an imperative objective for Africa if it is to realize the goals and targets set by Agenda 2063 and the SGDs.

The need to accelerate progress on the policy front is imperative with regard to customs procedures and visa restrictions, and bringing about the full ratification and use of the African passport. It is equally important to enhance the form, quality and diversity of transboundary tradable goods and services.

Within the context of the African Union Commission, the NEPAD Agency is determined, through various programmes, to support regional economic communities and AU member States in their efforts to make further advances, including on the positive trends in governance and the general business environment with regard to macroeconomic policies and investment options. That should have a tangible impact on the capacity and quality of trade-enhancing factors, including human-capital development, stronger and more accountable institutions and better infrastructure — especially with regard to transport, communication and electricity.

The continent is already making progress on major motorways and regional railway projects to create inland connections. Such efforts need to be augmented, both in terms of technologies and investment financing. One example is the standard-gauge railway that will connect Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and South Sudan. On the other hand, sea transport is also an important feature in Africa's trade, accounting for close to 90 per cent of Africa's trade movements. That implies the need to strengthen the functioning of seaports, which runs from modernization to improved administration. Another example is the 4,500-kilometre highway that will link Algiers to Lagos.

Within the global communication context in which we live, expanded and widespread Internet penetration cannot be overemphasized. It is a critical issue, and Africa is moving at the same pace as the rest of the world in building relevant Internet capacity and systems.

My third and last point is about addressing inequality. Africa has learned that wealth creation is important in the pursuit of economic growth and inclusive development, but equally important and highly critical for Africa is the issue of the distribution of that wealth in order to make sure that growth is inclusive. It is clear that the world, and the more so Africa, cannot continue to have non-inclusive growth. It is not good for business, nor is it good for political stability and social cohesion. It is not good for economic growth. It is not good for peace and security. That is an issue that has been highlighted by our sister organization, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). As Member States know, the APRM is a critical instrument for the improvement of our governance systems.

While inequality, especially as measured in terms of income and wealth levels, is a global phenomenon, addressing inequality requires that it be analysed and understood within the local, socioeconomic and cultural context. The NEPAD Agency, within the African Union framework, aims to work with AU member States and the United Nations agencies to produce a better national understanding of our situation and to provide ways of measuring inequality. In that context, member States must have access to relevant analytical and decision-making tools to guide their policies and investments.

In conclusion, I would like to recall one, I believe, underlying principle in both the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals — the commitment to results. The African Union Commission, the regional economic communities and the NEPAD Agency are keen and committed to collaborate with the United Nations agencies to support member States in their efforts to realize their ambition for concrete change and impact through their development efforts.

(*spoke in French*)

The African Union, through its cooperative framework with the United Nations, is prepared to step up its partnership in order to create conditions conducive to accelerating swift implementation of the African Union's Agenda 2063, which is fully in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. The future of the world and of Africa will depend on the success of that implementation.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on these items.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 66 and its sub-items (a) and (b) and agenda item 13.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.